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ABSTRACT

The 1973-74 academic year marked the inception of a formal long-range planning program at Hampton Institute. The year began with the Educational Staff Institute orienting the faculty, staff, students, and alumni to the significance of the long-range planning process and the role that each academic department, division, and support area would be expected to play in formulating a plan. The program plan for each academic and each support area has been summarized by the Planning Office, reviewed by the Planning Team, and analyzed by the Analytical Studies Group. Project objectives will be presented regarding decisions, facilities, data, or services. Final recommendations received from the Executive Committee will be reviewed by the Long-Range Planning Council and incorporated into the planning program where necessary.
(Author/LBH)

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CURRENT STATUS OF PLANNING AT HAMPTON INSTITUTE

by

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October 1, 1974

Attitudes

The 1973-74 academic year marked the inception of a formal long-range planning program at Hampton Institute. The year commenced with the Educational Staff Institute being devoted to orientating the faculty, staff, students and alumni as to the significance of the long-range planning process and the role that each academic department, division and support area would be expected to play in formulating a long-range plan for the College. Emphasis was placed upon the continuous nature of the long-range planning process and how such a plan would enable the College to anticipate various problems it would have to deal with subsequently.

Long-range planning is essentially a systematic way of predicting various future outcomes and comparing the consequences of alternative decision possibilities predicated by present circumstances. Just as we cannot forecast human behavior with slide-rule precision, a long-range plan is not a precise indicator of what the future holds. Long-range planning is based upon certain contingencies or trends. It involves the creation of alternative methods for achieving institutional goals and the comparison of these alternatives. The key role of evaluation in this process is to delineate, obtain, and provide useful information for judging decision alternatives. Consequently, careful observation, discernment and analysis of the present situation and trends

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enable us to reasonably forecast future outcomes. Long-range planning is facilitating decision-making and policy development, increasing accountability and eradicating redundance such as course duplications and antiquated offerings. The total planning program is geared to stimulating intellectual and personal development of each student and providing for him or her the best education our human and material resources will allow. One very obvious claim of significance is that communication has immensely increased as a result of our long-range planning. Our long-range planning effort has provided a format, even at this juncture, for students, faculty, administrators and educational support staff to see the future in a different perspective and to recognize common objectives and interdependence. The administration has become aware of the practices that inhibit or impede progress. "Selectivity" and "efficiency" are adding impetus to our endeavor to become frugal in maintaining effective operations with more and more financial constraints. Also, pressures for external accountability and the decreased support for traditional programs are sensitizing academic departments to unmet societal needs as a source of goals. Academic departments, divisions, and support areas are now being encouraged by the administration to pattern certain aspects of their management procedures after that of selective departments, divisions or support areas which have demonstrated management procedures which have assured savings for the College. With one of the major objectives of all components of the College being to maintain and foster academic standards, cost-saving efforts will be closely monitored.

With the spiral of an inflationary economy and a concomitant upgrading of requirements for accreditation by the Commission on Colleges upon us, we

are experiencing times that demand solid commitment to the cause of education. Continuous long-range planning is of a logical necessity if we are to cope with the imminent problems of gigantic magnitude. We cannot afford a lapse in our cognizance. Our overall purpose and a procedure of continuous evaluation must be borne in mind, as analysis and monitoring must be enacted to ensure the viability of a competitive and dynamic program of education at Hampton Institute.

We have not sought to formulate a long-range plan by a mere addition of activities, without a thorough examination of our existing base. Our concentrated efforts are directed toward improving upon our existing base--to do better what we are already doing. We are seeking to accomplish goals in more effective and economical ways. We have meticulously set in motion the mechanism for greater coordination of support services with academic departments. Such coordination should minimize the human and material resources necessary to bring about satisfactory results and allow us to become more effective in the utilization of available resources. Consequently, we are carefully examining the gap between our aspirations and our resources.

It should not be construed that perhaps we need to "re-invent the wheel" to deal with the seemingly more difficult problems presented by each succeeding day. However, we must harness the forces about us to ensure that our energies and resources are expended with maximum efficiency.

Discipline is a virtue only when it is self-imposed. Academic and support area supervisors are encouraged to systematize their day-to-day operations and to manage with prudence or practical vision. Planning and management

are two essential tools in academic management. Since good management is facilitated by good planning, knowledge of a system designed to improve such planning would result in better management and would increase the probability of successful completion of objectives. It is our affirmative duty to pursue this course of action.

Where Do We Go From Here?

The program plan for each academic and each support area has been summarized by the Planning Office, rigorously reviewed by the Planning Team, and crucibly analyzed by the Analytical Studies Group. Many of these program plans have undergone revision as the information and data from these program plans have been synthesized and synchronized by the Planning Office. Much of this information and data is still being carefully scrutinized by the Planning Office to eliminate unforeseen errors and conflicts. In the interim, the Planning Office has recapitulated and disseminated copies of these program plans to the constituent faculty and staff in the academic or support areas of their concern. Each faculty or staff member should take some time to peruse the program plan for his department, division or support area. Before any project is initiated, the major and subordinate objectives must be identified in order to accomplish the overall objective. To accomplish this, project objectives should be presented to faculty and staff members. Project objectives may consist of decisions, facilities, data, or services. Members of each academic department or support area should participate in the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the progress of their program plan. Evaluation information must possess several properties if it is to be systematically useful. It must be valid, reliable, timely and relevant to the issues.

Because management decisions consist of selecting from alternatives, it should be comparative. Existing and alternatively proposed programs should be continually reviewed and analyzed in terms of their relevance to the achievement of a predetermined set of objectives. Major concerns should be how well program elements are being interrelated and the extent to which coordination of and communication between the various elements exist. As we continue the planning cycle the process of estimating the future should bring all of us closer to understanding and participating in decision-making.

We anticipate that the synthesis of our Long-Range Planning Document will be complete by mid-December of this year and that copies will be forwarded to the members of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. The Executive Committee will then review the Long-Range Planning Document and make its recommendations. These recommendations received from the Executive Committee will be reviewed by the Long-Range Planning Council (Planning Team and Analytical Studies Group) and incorporated into the planning program where deemed necessary. The Planning Document will then be prepared for Board action at their April, 1975 meeting.